

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 CIEP-02

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FEA-02 FPC-01 H-03 INR-10

INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07 RSC-01 SAM-01

SCI-06 SP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

DRC-01 /161 W

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R 020746Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9444

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS KUWAIT 1706

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG

SUBJECT: KUWAITI PRESS REPORTS NEW SAUDI/ARAMCO DEAL

1. JOINTLY-OWNED ENGLISH LANGUAGE KUWAIT TIMES AND ARABIC SIYASSA TODAY CARRY SPECIAL ARTICLE PURPORTING TO OUTLINE NEW SAUDI PARTICIPATION POLICY. ARTICLES DIFFER, BUT SUBSTANCE IS SAME, AND WERE WRITTEN BY LOCAL STAFF REPORTER.

2. ARTICLES, CITING INFORMED SOURCES, SAY THAT NEW ARRANGEMENT WAS PART OF RECENT SAUDI-AMERICAN AGREEMENT AND PROVIDES THAT SAUDI ARABIA, THROUGH PETROMIN, WILL RECEIVE LARGE NUMBERS OF SHARES IN ARAMCO'S PARENT AMERICAN COMPANIES. THUS, SAUDI ARABIA WILL NOT ONLY BECOME PART OWNER OF THE COMPANIES BUT WILL BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN BOTH UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM ACTIVITIES OF THOSE COMPANIES IN BOTH HEMISPHERES. ON THE OTHER HAND, ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLES, THE NEW ARRANGEMENT GIVES

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ARAMCO A NEW PERMANENT STATUS IN SAUDI ARABIA. THE ARTICLES

POINT OUT THAT THIS ARRANGEMENT WILL ENABLE SAUDI ARABIA TO LEAP-FROG OVER PAST AND PRESENT NATIONALIZATION AND PARTICIPATION PATTERNS AND JOIN THE CLUB OF INDUSTRIAL GIANTS WHICH STILL CONTROL TO LARGE EXTENT ONE OF LARGEST INDUSTRIES IN WORLD.

3. COMMENT: WE DO NOT KNOW SOURCE OF STORY NOR WHETHER THERE GRAIN OF TRUTH TO ITS SUBSTANCE. IT NOT UNKNOWN FOR KUWAITI PRESS FABRICATE ARTICLES SUCH AS THIS OUT OF WHOLE CLOTH. IT CERTAIN, HOWEVER, THAT COURSE TO BE TAKEN BY SAUDI ARABIA IS IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN CURRENT DEBATE OVER KUWAIT'S PORPOSED PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT, AND ANY SPECULATION THIS SUBJECT OF MORE THAN PASSING INTEREST IN KUWAIT.
STOLTZFUS

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